

APPLICATOR SHIELD

Field and Background of the Invention

5 [001] This invention relates to applicator shields, particularly for applying or removing mascara or other facial makeup, to the face and/or eyes. More particularly, the invention is for a device useful in applying or removing makeup, especially mascara to the eyelashes, and which can be easily held in position
10 with respect to the eye and face so as to protect the area around the eyelashes from receiving any mascara during application and/or removal.

[002] Applying makeup is widespread in many countries and
15 cultures of the world. Many women apply makeup as part of their daily grooming, and makeup is also used extensively in the field of entertainment, such as by actors in movies and on the stage, as well as by people appearing on television. There may, additionally, be many other contexts in which makeup is applied to the face. One
20 common form of makeup involves the use of mascara, which is a cosmetic used particularly for coloring the eyelashes. Typically, mascara is applied using a small, round brush, the brush being rubbed or dipped in the coloring prior to the application on the eye lashes, and thereafter brushed onto the eyelashes.

[003] Applying mascara in an effective and consistent manner is not always easy. For one thing, there is nothing behind the eyelashes to prevent them from simply moving away from the brush, and, additionally, unless the application is carried out with great care, mascara may be applied to areas around the eye by mistake, thereby coloring such other areas where the color is not desired. The absence of any support behind the eyelashes could also lead to clumping of the coloring on the eyelashes so that it is inconsistently applied, and lacks a smooth, natural look as a result thereof.

[004] When there is nothing behind the eyelashes against which the brush can push, so as to sandwich the eyelashes between the brush and another structure, the mascara must be applied very lightly, and even when carefully applied, can result in undesirable fouling and clumped mascara being deposited on the back of the eyelid or other areas around the eye.

[005] When removing mascara, the eyelashes must be washed, typically by using the cheek or other areas around the eye against which the eyelashes are pressed, and this can result in residual mascara rubbing off on the cheek or around the eye, and which must itself then be removed. Further, and for this reason, it is generally extremely difficult to remove mascara without disturbing other eye or adjacent facial makeup. Therefore, if mascara is to be

removed and reapplied, this process will often involve as a consequence removal of all other eye and adjacent facial makeup which has been applied.

5 Summary of the Invention

[006] In one aspect, the present invention provides an eye guard or eye protector or eye shield for use when applying makeup, the eye protector isolating certain parts of the eye, or eyelashes, so that makeup can be applied more effectively and consistently to an isolated area.

[007] Generally, the invention therefore relates to a device for shielding a part of the eye, while exposing another part of the eye or eyelashes, so that the exposed part can be more readily and efficiently applied with makeup. The invention has a particularly useful function when applying mascara.

[008] The device or shield of the invention can be used with equal effectiveness in removing makeup as well, and particularly for removing mascara which has been applied to eyelashes.

[009] Preferably, the device comprises a body portion, dimensioned and configured based on the shape and curvature of the eyelid and surrounding areas, and a handle portion for holding the device or shield in the preferred position. Preferably, the handle

portion is configured relative to the body portion so as to provide an unimpeded view and access to the eye, and particularly the eyelashes, so that the device of the invention has the effect of shielding certain parts, but without causing any inconvenience in reaching those parts of the eye, such as the eyelashes, where makeup, including mascara, needs to be applied or removed.

[010] According to one aspect of the invention, there is provided an applicator shield for use in the application or removal of eye and surrounding area makeup, the applicator shield comprising a body portion having a contoured wall and a shaped edge for locating about the eye; and a handle connected to and extending from the body portion.

[011] Preferably, the body portion is located between eyelashes and the adjacent area of the eye, comprises a contoured wall of variable contour for a fitting locating about the eye

[012] The handle comprise may two sections, and is connected to the body portion so that, in use, the body portion can be located such that access to the eye is not obstructed by the handle. In one embodiment, the handle includes a container portion and the container portion may include a brush.

[013] In one form, the contoured wall has an inner surface and

an outer surface, and the outer surface against which the lashes adapted to abut contains score lines.

[014] The applicator shield may be made out of plastic, metal, or the like. At least the body portion may be comprised of a color which can provide a contrast to the color of the eyelashes. The applicator shield may also have a mirror formed thereon, and a light and a power source for the light.

[015] Preferably, the contoured wall varies in its degree of contour so as to suit the particular features of a user. Also, the shaped wall may be of arcuate shape, and the arcuate shape can be varied depending upon the features of the user. The shaped edge of the body portion may have a flat or blunted surface for engagement with the eye or surrounding area.

[016] According to another aspect of the invention, there is provided an applicator shield for use in the application or removal of eye and surrounding area makeup, the applicator shield comprising a body portion having a contoured wall and a shaped edge for locating about the eye.

[017] According to yet another aspect of the invention, there is provided a method for applying or removing makeup to the eye or surrounding area comprising the steps of inserting an applicator

shield between the eyelashes and the area of the eye behind the eyelashes, and applying or removing the makeup with an implement against the eyelashes such that the shield forms a back wall behind the eyelashes to meet the implement.

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Brief Description of the Drawings

[018] In the drawings:

[019] Figure 1 of the drawings is a perspective view of one embodiment of an applicator shield in accordance with the present invention;

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[020] Figure 2 is a side view of the applicator shield as shown in Figure 1 of the drawings;

[021] Figure 3 is a top view of the applicator shield shown in Figures 1 and 2 of the drawings;

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[022] Figure 4 is a perspective view of another embodiment of the invention, showing certain additional and optional features thereof;

[023] Figure 5 is a detail view of the container on the applicator shield as shown in Figure 4 of the drawings;

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[024] Figure 6 is a top view of another embodiment of the applicator shield of the invention; and

[025] Figure 7 is a perspective view of an applicator shield of the invention shown schematically on the face of a user to isolate the eyelashes for the application of mascara.

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Detailed Description of the Invention

[026] Reference is now made to the various Figures illustrating different views and embodiments of the invention. The drawings generally show an applicator shield for use in applying or removing makeup, and more particularly for the application to or removal of mascara on the eyelashes. The applicator shield isolates off portions of the eye which are to receive makeup, providing a shield or protection for those remaining parts of the eye and surrounding areas.

[027] With reference to Figure 1 of the drawings, there is shown an applicator shield 10 in accordance with the principles of the invention. The applicator shield 10 comprises a body portion 14, and a handle 16.

[028] The body portion 14 comprises a curved wall 18 having side edge 20 and side edge 22, as well as a blunt or flattened lower edge 24. The lower edge 24 is also of arcuate design, so as to follow the contours of the body around the eye, as will be described more fully below. The curved wall 18 is widest near the lower edge 24, and narrows or tapers towards a connecting portion 26, where the body portion 14 is attached to the handle portion 16.

[029] The handle portion 16 comprises an elongate member generally integral with the body portion 14, and has a mid-section

28 and an end section 30. The mid-section 28 extends from the connecting portion 26, and the end section 30 is slightly angled relative to the mid-section 28 to facilitate convenience of use, as will be described. The handle portion 16 has flat side walls 34 and 36, an upper wall 38 and a lower wall 40.

[030] As mentioned, it will be seen, particularly from Figures 1 and 2, that the mid-section 28 of the handle portion 16 is angled with respect to the body portion 14. This mid-section 28 thus tends to extend upward, and generally away from, the lower edge 24. As will be clearer from Figure 7 of the drawings, this preferred configuration of the mid-section 28 allows the user to place the applicator shield 10 over or on the eye such that it is held away from the eye and does not get in the way of the user when applying or removing the mascara. The end section 30 is angled relative to the mid-section 28, so as to, in use, form a more horizontal position, once more for the convenience of the user. Thus, the two-part sectioned handle portion 16 in overall effect results in the applicator shield 10, and particularly the body portion 14 thereof, being over the eye, but the handle portion 16 being above the eye, so that the user can use the area below the handle portion 16 to more effectively view the application process in the mirror, and also to have better access to the eyelashes.

[031] Reference is now made to Figure 4 of the drawings, which

shows another embodiment of the applicator shield 10 of the invention. (Note that, throughout this specification, like numerals will be used for like components in different embodiments for ease of understanding). In Figure 4, an applicator shield 10a comprises the body portion 14 and handle portion 16. The body portion 14 is in most respects very similar to that illustrated and described with reference to Figure 1 of the drawings. The body portion 14, and particularly the curved wall 18 thereof, has an inner surface 44 and an outer surface 46. The end section 30 of the handle portion has attached thereto a small container 48, of generally rectangular shape, although other embodiments may have any suitable or desired shape and/or dimensions. The container 48 has a front edge 50 which is integrally connected to the end section 30. As will be described, the container 48 is hollowed out, and comprises a cap 52 which can be releasably removed and reinserted on the container 48.

[032] The container 48 comprises flat surfaces 54 and 56, and the flat surface 54 includes a mirror 58 of small dimension. The mirror 58 may be useful for users who may be applying makeup away from another readily available larger mirror, so that the progress and effects of the application can be monitored using the mirror 58.

[033] In Figure 5 of the drawings, which shows a detail of the

container 48, it will be seen that the cap 52 can be removed by pulling it out, and that the cap 52 is connected to a shaft 60 having a brush 62 at its end 64. The inside of the container 48 has a supply of mascara 66. When the cap 52 is inserted through open
5 end 68 of the container 48, the brush 62 will scrape along the supply of mascara 66, so that some of the mascara 66 will adhere to the brush 62. The cap 52 and shaft 60 can then be entirely removed from the container 48, and the mascara on the brush 62 then applied to the eyelashes.

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[034] The cap 52 engages the container 48 by releasably fastening to it, so that the cap 52 will be firmly attached to the container 48, but can be easily removed by the user when required.

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[035] Figure 6 of the drawings shows yet a further embodiment of the invention. In Figure 6, it will be seen that the body portion 14 has an outer surface 46 which is scored with a plurality of small grooves or channels 70. The depth of these grooves 70 as well as the number of such grooves 70 scored within the outer
20 surface 46 may vary considerably. In any event, the grooves 70 are intended to receive the eyelashes or bristles of a mascara applicator brush during application of the mascara, and have the important consequence in the application process of the mascara by tending to keep the eyelashes separate, or in separate groups, for
25 enhanced application.

[036] The applicator shield 10 of the invention has a number of beneficial effects to improve and enhance the process for applying mascara to the eyelashes. One such benefit may be felt by people with longer eyelashes, since it is more likely for people with longer eyelashes will touch the back of the eye, or some other part around the eye, during mascara application and cause undesired rub-off or fouling. Importantly, too, the applicator shield 10 of the invention provides a surface against which the mascara brush can operate. In normal circumstances, the brush must simply be lightly rotated around the eyelash, since there is nothing behind the eyelash to stop the brush. There is also nothing to hold the eyelashes apart, with the concomitant result that the application of the mascara can sometimes cause clumping or uneven application.

[037] The invention thus has the advantage that the mascara brush hits the application shield, instead of the eye. Further, in applying the makeup, the brush can go all the way through the eyelashes, hitting the back surface of the applicator guide or shield, once more allowing for a more even application. Without the guard/guide, the very light touch required in the application makes it more difficult for the brush to go through or across the eyelashes. If more force is required to go through the eyelashes, this can of course result in misapplication of mascara other than on the eyelashes, clumping, and uneven application.

[038] The applicator shield 10 of the invention is useful not only in applying mascara to the eyelashes, but also in washing it off or removing it. Such a process can now be achieved more effectively and quickly, and without affecting other eye makeup.

5 With the applicator shield 10 in place, as will be described below with respect to Figure 7, an appropriate medium, such as cotton, cloth or cotton cloth, can be used to simply wipe off the mascara.

[039] As mentioned, the body portion 14 has a curved wall 18,
10 and the lower edge 24 is arcuate or somewhat flattened, to fit around the eye. It will, of course, be appreciated that the invention is not in any way limited to one particular curvature configuration, or arcuate or other shape of the lower edge. This
15 arcuate shape of the lower edge 24 can best be seen in Figure 3 of the drawings. The invention acknowledges that different people have differently configured features. For example, some women may have a flatter curvature or curve of the eye, while others may have a configuration which is more curved or rounded. The invention may
20 therefore come in different sizes, shapes, curvatures and surface arcs, so that a person can select the applicator shield which best suits her needs, and the particular shape of her features. Thus, a woman may experiment with different sizes and curvatures of the applicator shield to choose one most comfortable for her features.

25 [040] Not only is the curvature of the curved wall 18 variable,

but also the degree of arcing of the lower edge 24 may be varied. The curved wall 18 is configured so as to gently accommodate the typical shape of the eyelid when covering the eye, while the lower edge 24 is actually applied and touches the upper or lower eyelid, just above or below the eyelashes respectively, to form a barrier or wall between the mascara brush and the surrounding eye, other than the eyelashes. These two characteristics (i.e. curvature and extent of arcing) of the applicator device are thus ones which can be varied between a large number of different forms, and designed independently of each other so as to fit different features.

[041] The handle portion 16 is, as described above, formed at an angle to the body portion 14 so that it conveniently keeps the hand holding the applicator shield 10 above or below the eye level, so that access to the eye, and in particularly the eyelashes, is not obstructed. Furthermore, the user is able to view the application of the mascara in a mirror, without obstruction when the handle is configured as shown in the drawings. While the handle in the drawings is shown as a two-section component, having a "dog-leg" shape or bend, the invention is not limited to this precise configuration. For example, the handle could be rounded in another embodiment, or such other shape as may be suitable.

[042] Either the inner and/or the outer surfaces 44 and 46 of the body portion 14 may have a scored configuration, or may be

flat. If scored, as shown in Figure 6 of the drawings, the bristles of the brush, and/or the eyelashes may go into the scores, which may help to improve the definition of the lashes when applied with mascara. In other words, the eyelashes, as well as the brush
5 bristles, may be separated or grouped during the application so that each lash can be more uniformly and individually applied with mascara.

[043] The applicator shield 10 of the invention may be
10 washable, reusable and/or disposable. It may be available as multiples in packs, and may also have different colors on the whole or a part thereof. The different colors may be useful in highlighting the eyelashes. For example, dark eyelashes stand out better against an applicator shield of a light color, and vice
15 versa.

[044] The applicator shield may also be made of any suitable component/material, such as metal, plastic, plastic-coated cardboard, or any other component/material or a combination
20 thereof.

[045] In one embodiment of the invention, the handle may be a container, such as a housing for a brush and mascara as indicated in one of the Figures. However, the container may be for other
25 items. These may include a clean brush which can be used after

applying mascara, often used for providing better definition. The container may also have within, or otherwise attached to a handle, a mirror of the type shown, a light with a small light power source, pivoting arms, or the device itself may be part of a kit, or comprise a separate kit. The device itself may therefore be placed in a container with other contents to form a kit useful for the application of makeup. The applicator shield may be foldable or bendable to facilitate compact storage thereof during non-use.

[046] Figure 7 of the drawings illustrates schematically the applicator shield 10 of the device in use. In one form, the applicator device 10 is shown above the eye 80, with the lower edge 24 sitting on the eye lid behind eyelashes 82, but in front of or over the eye lid 84. It will be seen that the handle portion 16 is well above the level of the eye, indicated by line 86, so as to provide unimpeded access and viewing in a mirror. With the eyelashes 82 being supported by the rearwardly placed applicator shield 10, application of mascara to the eyelashes 82 can be easily achieved. Likewise, removal of mascara from the eyelashes can also be effectively carried out.

[047] In the same Figure, an applicator shield 10b is shown, but in this case below the eye 80. (Of course, in use, the applicator shield 10 will either be above or below the eye, and Figure 7, for illustrative purposes only, shows the position of

both). The applicator shield 10b has a handle 16b, which by its shape is also well below the observation and access points, indicated by the line 86. The lower lashes 88 also use the applicator shield 10b as a backdrop against which the mascara can be applied or removed.

[048] The invention is not limited to the precise details, but many variations of the applicator shield within the scope of the invention can be made.